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Roasters in waiting for Colbert

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In case any of the scheduled speakers didn't show at Friday night's 20th Annual Roast for Spina Bifida, there would have been plenty of roasters-in-waiting available, given the target: Comedy Central's **Stephen Colbert**.

Take Rep. **Ed Markey**, D-Mass., who was overheard commenting that Colbert is an easier subject to ridicule than ABC's Bob Woodruff, whom Markey roasted last year.

Or Rep. **Steve Cohen**, D-Tenn., whom Colbert famously referred to as a black woman. Would he have liked to take a shot back at the fake newsman? "Would I ever!" Cohen said. I would have at least liked to have taken a free throw!"

But the lineup for these things only goes four deep, explained PBS's **Judy Woodruff**, who founded the event with her husband, **Al Hunt**. "I'm sure there are a lot of people clamoring to roast Colbert, but my husband and I went about it methodically. We wanted a little Republican, a little Democrat; a little Congress, a little White House."

So they settled on White House press secretary **Dana Perino**, Del. **Eleanor Holmes Norton**, D-D.C., soon-to-be Chief of Staff **Rahm Emanuel** and Sen. **Orrin Hatch**, R-Utah.

"It beats hanging out with the 20 people" at the president's economic summit, Perino joked. She explained that the material was an "office group effort."

How about Norton? "Please, I'm a member of Congress, not a speechwriter," she said. "We got around a table; I came up with some, [my staff] came up with some."

"It won't be long before an Irish American who insists on pronouncing his name with a French accent gets elected," she ribbed Colbert from the stage. "Yes we can, Colbert!"

Then there was Perino, reacting to Colbert's previous comment that she had a "rockin' bod": "I wish I could return the compliment."

And Hatch: "I don't have to stay up late to watch conservatives make fools of themselves. That's my entire day."

Finally, Emanuel: "There's still hope for [Colbert]. It's the same way we feel about Joe Lieberman."

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So how did Colbert take all of this? "My feelings were only hurt once," he said upon taking the podium, "when you flew me here coach."

In fact, he turned the tables on the roasters (and the rest of the room).

To Norton: Washington's voting status makes it "like American Samoa with urban blight. The Guam you can drive to."

To Perino: "I always knew Scott McClellan would hatch into something beautiful."

To Hatch: "Orrin Hatch was a conservative way before it was cool. And way after."

To **Andrea Mitchell**: "Keep kissing [Alan Greenspan]. He's going to turn into a prince one of these days."

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